

CONFIDENTIAL.]

REPORT

[No. 13 of 1878.]

ON

NATIVE PAPERS

FOR THE

Week ending the 30th March 1878.

LIST OF NEWSPAPERS.

No.	Names of Newspapers.	Place of publication.	Number of copies issued.	Dates of papers received and examined for the week.
BENGALI.				
<i>Monthly.</i>				
1	"Bhārat Shramjībī"	Barāhānagar ...	4,000	
2	"Rajshahye Sambād"	Rajshahye ...	.....
3	"Grāmbārtā Prakāshikā"	Comercolly ...	200	
4	"Arya Pratibhā"	Bhowanipore ...	.....
5	"Suhrid"	Calcutta ...	.....
<i>Bi-monthly.</i>				
6	"Culna Prakāsh"	Culna ...	.....
7	"Hindu Lalanā"	Nawabgunge, Barrack-pore. ...	.....	14th March 1878.
<i>Weekly.</i>				
8	"Banga Hitaishī"	Bhowanipore ...	.....
9	"Bishwa Dūt"	Tāligunj, Calcutta ...	.....	20th ditto.
10	"Bhārat Mihir"	Mymensing ...	658	21st ditto.
11	"Bhārat Sangskarak"	Calcutta ...	.....	18th ditto.
12	"Bengal Advertiser"	Ditto ...	.....
13	"Dacca Prakāsh"	Dacca ...	400	24th ditto.
14	"Education Gazette"	Hooghly ...	1,168	22nd and 29th March 1878.
15	"Moorshedabad Pratinidhi"	Berhampore ...	.....
16	"Pratikār"	Ditto ...	235	
17	"Grāmbārtā Prakāshikā"	Comercolly ...	200	
18	"Sambād Bhāskar"	Calcutta ...	.....
19	"Sulabha Samāchār"	Ditto ...	5,500	23rd March 1878.
20	"Sādhārani"	Chinsurah ...	516	
21	"Hindu Hitaishinī"	Dacca ...	300	23rd ditto.
22	"Soma Prakāsh"	Bhowanipore ...	700	25th ditto.
23	"Sahachār"	Calcutta ...	.....	18th ditto.
24	"Hindu Ranjikā"	Bauleah, Rajshahye ...	.....
25	"Rungpore Dik Prakāsh"	Kākiniā, Rungpore ...	250	7th ditto.
26	"Burdwan Prachārikā"	Burdwan ...	165	
<i>Bi-weekly.</i>				
27	"Banga Mittra"	Calcutta ...	4,000	
<i>Daily.</i>				
28	"Sambād Prabhākar"	Ditto ...	550	18th to 22nd March 1878.
29	"Sambād Purnachandrodaya"	Ditto ...	.....	23rd to 26th ditto.
30	"Samāchār Chandrikā"	Ditto ...	.....	18th to 29th ditto.
31	"Banga Vidyā Prakāshikā"	Ditto ...	625	
32	"Arya Mihir"	Ditto ...	.....
ENGLISH AND BENGALI.				
<i>Weekly.</i>				
33	"Howrah Hitakari"	Bethar, Howrah ...	300	
34	"Moorshedabad Patrikā"	Berhampore ...	.....	15th March 1878.
35	"Burrisal Bārtābaha"	Burrisal ...	300	
ENGLISH AND URDU.				
36	"Urdu Guide"	Calcutta ...	400	23rd ditto.
URDU.				
<i>Bi-monthly.</i>				
37	"Akhbār-ul-Akhiār"	Mozufferpore ...	.....
HINDI.				
<i>Weekly.</i>				
38	"Behār Bandhu"	Bankipore, Patna ...	509	20th and 27th March 1878.
PERSIAN.				
39	"Jām-Jahān-numā"	Calcutta ...	250	22nd ditto.

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION.

HINDU LALANA,
March 14th, 1878.

WE make the following extracts from an article on the License Tax Act, which appears in the *Hindu Lalaná*, of the 14th March, a paper published every fortnight at Barrackpore, and edited by a respectable Hindu lady:—Should Government really introduce this tax, the poorer classes, with their families, will very likely perish for want of food and clothing; at any rate, living in unrepaired huts during the rainy season, they will be exposed to the severity of the weather. Under this Act, a man who earns more than Rs. 16 a month, will have to pay annually Rs. 2 as tax; although no one need to be told that the high prices which rule at the present time make it almost impossible for a man on that income, who belongs to the middle classes of society, to make both ends meet. Where will he get the money to pay the tax? Prices are now four times of what they were twenty years ago. Government may indeed be ignorant of this, and harass the people with taxes; but those who have experience on the subject know what hardship the change has occasioned to the poor. If a License Tax on trades, dealings, &c., be made permanent, famines will be perennial in this country; and their constant attendants,—disease and pestilence,—will proceed apace with the work of destruction. We therefore ask Government quietly and carefully to think on the subject and repeal the License Tax Act. If there is, however, a pressing need of funds, these should be raised by means of some other tax, such as one on tobacco. As it is, a License Tax, excluding from its operation the zemindars, officials drawing high fixed salaries, and all men of wealth, if levied, will only have the effect of pressing severely upon the poor.

The License Tax Act.

2. The same paper asks Government, in the interests of public morals and decency, to repeal the Indian Contagious Diseases' Act, 1868. In the hands of unscrupulous officers of the police and village headmen and gomasthas, it is an engine of oppression on the unfortunates, who, in not a few cases, are obliged to purchase their immunity from the operation of the Act by means of bribes.

The Contagious Diseases' Act should be repealed.

HINDU LALANA.

SAMACHAR
CHANDRIKA,
March 18th, 1878.

3. The *Samáchar Chandriká*, of the 18th March, thus addresses his fellow-countrymen in reference to the application to Bengal of the provisions of the Vernacular Press Act:—There is utter ruin! The liberty of the Native Press has been taken away; and are natives of India still easy in their minds? Are the pleasure-loving Baboos of Calcutta still absorbed in their frivolities? The people of India, especially those of Bengal, must be aware that any progress which they may have made, and any courage, learning, or intelligence, which they may have acquired, has been entirely due to the Native newspapers. It does not, therefore, look well for them to remain easy. If they do not now feel for us, and use means to protect us from this Act of Sir A. Arbuthnot, they will be justly charged with ingratitude by the whole world. They should therefore stir themselves up; although the Secretary of State, having approved of the measure, there remains but little hope of success. Alas! in what inauspicious moment was the *Amrita Bazar Patriká* born in Jessore, or why was it not smothered to death at its birth?

The Native Press Act.

4. The *Bhárat Sangskárah*, of the 18th March, makes the following observations in an article headed "What shall we write about now?" Government being about to close the way of political discussion to native newspapers, many are greatly troubled in their minds, and ask "What shall we write about

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SANGSKARAK,
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now?" A little consideration will, however, show that there are yet many topics which may be properly discussed in the native papers; and that it is idle to talk of politics in preference. Political discussions become those only that really administer the affairs of this Empire; to us they mean a mere waste of time. The present Act, therefore, has been to us a blessing in disguise. A discussion of topics, relating to sociology, morals, religion, agriculture, industries, and education, is of exceeding importance at the present time. Should we ever succeed in achieving national advancement by a discussion and study of these, we shall then really find it a pleasure to handle other topics. It is much to be regretted, that political subjects have hitherto occupied so much of our attention, as to utterly exclude all discussion of matters exceedingly important. We can do more good to the country by attending to its real wants and seeking to remove them.

5. The same paper thus writes on the Vernacular Press Act: The cry had been long raised that native newspapers had been started in every district and town of

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March 18th, 1878.

Bengal, and that officials had grown quite restive under the venom of their writings. There were sharp criticisms also on the native press in the Provincial Administration Reports. From all this, we had long our apprehensions that some day or other Government might hurl its thunderbolt on the heads of the native editors. What, however, we could not believe was that the British Government, which is the chief ally of freedom, and has shown its boundless dignity and greatness by conferring liberty on the press, would so hastily pass an Act prejudicial to its interests. Unfortunately for us, that which was deemed impossible has actually come to pass; and the Government of India, without any previous notice or warning, and without affording the accused any opportunity of defending themselves, has, at one sitting of the Legislative Council, adjudged the fate of the native press.

What can be a greater matter for shame and regret than that our rulers should now find it necessary to revoke, with regret, as unworthily bestowed, an invaluable privilege conferred on the people by Sir Charles Metcalfe, Lord Macaulay, and other great men in 1835—the liberty of the press? Of the speakers who supported the Bill in the Legislative Council, Maharajah Jatindra Mohan Tagore alone represented the natives. He spoke but little; a circumstance which shows that he was obliged, much against his will, and owing to his difficult position, to give his vote for the passing of the measure. Other speakers, however, freely expressed their minds and gave in their complete adherence to it. The extracts read before the Council were, it seems, taken from the Weekly Reports on Native Papers. Of the specimens, a few are, beyond doubt, open to great objection; while others are not, however, quite unjustifiable. But is it consonant with justice that the rulers should thus, on the strength of a few extracts used for examples, at once condemn and punish the entire body of native editors? Cannot such passages be collected in abundance from the Anglo-Indian papers? And ought not those, who perpetrate wrongs, have more of the attention of the rulers, than they who merely expose them? We are, however, prepared to admit that there may be papers, the very disgrace of the vernacular press, which exist solely for the purpose of indulging in falsehoods, libels, extortions. Such are objects of contempt and censure with the great majority of the editors, than whom none desires more earnestly their suppression. But is it equitable to visit the shortcomings of one or two obscure native prints upon the entire body of native editors, and thus cast a blot upon them? Many of the speakers described the English papers also, as partaking in a large measure of the defects of the native press, and yet, according to them, a distinction should

be made in favour of the former. And the reason is that the writings of the vernacular press, being addressed to ignorant and uneducated people, are more likely to produce mischief than the effusions of the Anglo-Indian prints, which are circulated among an educated class of readers. We are exceedingly gratified to find that no better reasons than this exist, in favour of making a distinction between English and native papers. Mr. Eden is indeed perfectly willing to advocate any restrictive measure in regard to the former, should this ever become necessary. God forbid that such a misfortune should ever befall native papers published in English.

Whatever may be the beneficial consequences which are likely to follow from the present Act, it will, in a large measure, repress the discussion of political matters in the columns of the native press. Not knowing what may happen, if anything of an unfavourable import be said about Government, the British nation, or the public officers, many, it is probable, will entirely cease to write on such topics. And the consequence of this will be that their conduct will only be applauded. Some of the speakers have indeed remarked that writings, such as those which appear in the English papers, are not objectionable. But considering that a distinction has been made between native and English papers, based on the class of readers to whom they are respectively addressed, it will not do for a vernacular journal to imitate the tone of any of his contemporaries of the English press. We thank the rulers, inasmuch as they have given us an assurance that, there will be no interference with the liberty of the better class of journals; but it behoves them to lay down more clearly the conditions, a compliance with which would entitle a paper to be ranked in this class, and to afford such facilities to native editors as would enable them honestly to discharge their duties, while fearlessly speaking the truth. In conclusion, the Native Press Association has now obtained an opportunity for proving its usefulness; and it should not be lost on any account.

SAHACHAR,
March 18th, 1878.

6. The *Sahachar*, of the 18th March, writes as follows on the same subject:—With the exception of that portion of his speech, in which the object of the present law is declared to be to prevent, and not to punish, sedition, we are compelled to agree with the rest of the arguments adduced by the Viceroy in support of the measure. During the last few years, a class of writers have appeared in the native press, who seem to think that the more Government is abused in their columns, the greater their glory. We have repeatedly, but in vain, warned them that, unless there was a change in the tone of their writings, the liberty of the press would be taken away. The privilege was one of great value; and we would have been doubtless glad had this law never been passed; but the speeches of the Viceroy and Sir Alexander Arbuthnot have convinced us that, in no country of Europe, would such writings be tolerated; and that had it been in England, the Ministry would have been obliged to enact some stringent law for the purpose of suppressing the evil. It is much to be regretted, however, that the whole press should have been thus put into a difficult position through the faults of a few hot-headed and imprudent writers.

There need, nevertheless, be no cause for alarm, so long as the writers conduct themselves with prudence and moderation. It has been rarely our good fortune to agree with Sir John Strachey on any subject; but we concur in the observations made by him in reference to this Bill. There will be no interference with the liberty of the newspapers, if only the writers know how to do their duty with a wise discretion. If Government have any faults, they should be pointed out in a respectful manner. There should be reasons given and arguments employed. What is the

good of unmitigated abuse? It is also desirable that Government should know that, on the whole, the native writers, even those who are the loudest in vituperation, are loyal to it. They are perfectly aware that the discontinuance of British rule in this country will lead to one of two things, viz. either a return of the anarchy which prevailed before, and of the incursions of the Bargas and Pindaries, and a stoppage of the extension of Railways and other works of public utility; or else the establishment of a cruel domination as that of the Russian power. There are also not a few cases in which, while the mind is sincere and loyal, strong writing is indulged in merely for the purpose of parading the writer's power. We can say this fearlessly of the press of this Province. However great may be the amount of insensate abuse contained in a Bengali paper, the writer is, generally speaking, a well-wisher of the British Government. He and his fellow editors consider it their true interest to desire the continuance of the present rule. But there is a limit to every thing; and the times are critical. It is not always that one's motives can be comprehended; a foreign Government, especially, must judge of them from the words in which they find expression. While on this subject, we deem it our duty to inform the rulers of one fact. They ought to be aware that a certain degree of discontent really prevails among the people. That discontent is not, of course, the same as a desire to subvert the Government. It does not greatly differ from what is occasionally observable in England; and according to which the Ministry shape their actions. Government should know that, at the present time, the entire body of the natives of India expect the introduction of a more liberal policy of administration into the country. During the last few years, the revenue has steadily increased; still new taxes are being imposed, and nothing has removed the wants of the Exchequer. The people appeal to the testimony of history, and ask that they should be allowed some voice in the administration of the finances. For this purpose, they have sought the introduction of a representative form of Government. It is indeed true that the Government of India does not resort to fresh schemes of taxation, so long as it is able to do without them; but we believe that deficits will continue to occur so long as the present system remains in force. Secondly, considerable discontent exists in connection with the Indian Civil Service. Thirdly, they want admission into the army. All the European powers possess large armies; while England alone among them has not troops sufficient for the defence of her possessions. And yet she can, if she chooses, raise from India an army larger than what is commanded by either Germany or Russia. The truth is that certain native editors believed that by means of occasional abuse and ridicule, Government might be induced to remove these causes of discontent; and it was not from any desire of subverting the British rule that they wrote as they did.

7. This paper, in another editorial, continues his observations on the same subject:—In the first place, there should

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not have been so much haste in connection

with this measure. It was introduced and passed at one sitting of the Council. Delay would have been injurious, says Lord Lytton. But how? At most, a few meetings would have been held, and a few speeches delivered. Unlike France, the people of this country cannot be excited to break the peace by means of inflammatory speeches or articles in the newspapers; they do not act even if encouraged. A little more time for deliberation would not have left the Bill in an incomplete form. The preamble ought to have been omitted. By this, Government, in a manner, admits that certain persons are attempting a subversion of the Government, and hence the necessity of the measure. This admission, regarding the power for mischief possessed by native editors, does not agree with what was said before,

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viz. that their writings are little read by the people. The circumstances under which the provisions of section 3 will be applicable are not clearly set forth. The last portion of clause (a) is unintelligible. There will be great difficulty in regard to the interpretations which may be put upon the words "excite antipathy between any persons of different races, castes, &c." Judges will differ in construing them. During the indigo riots of 1860, the native papers, in their writings, encouraged the tenantry to form combinations and refuse to sow indigo. Although not directly, Government practically approved of their action. Will not the newspapers now be allowed to say any thing, should an indigo-planter commit oppressions? Certainly the Act cannot be so unreasonable in its application. We, however, fear that, should any Magistrate really consider writing of this order objectionable, it will be hard to blame him. These remarks do not apply to the second clause. There are, however, officers occasionally met with, who consider it derogatory to their dignity that any one should be allowed to indulge even in reasonable argument. There are certain papers published in the Mofussil which are not regarded with favor by the Magistrates. Hence the last part of clause (b), the words thereby inducing that public servant to do any act, or to forbear or delay to do any act, &c., ought to have been omitted. Just suppose that a case, like that of the minor zemindar of Hetampore, takes place. The Collector desires to send him to the Wards' Institution; but the minor's mother objects to it. The officer gives way to a little hastiness. Now suppose one, in protesting against his conduct, says that, considering a petition has been made to the Lieutenant-Governor, it is oppression on the part of the Collector not to wait for His Honor's decision. No sane man would regard such writing in the light of a crime; although the faulty collocation of the words might warrant such an interpretation.

The provision regarding the execution of a bond is exceedingly severe. Most of the proprietors of native papers are poor. Many derive no profit from their labors. The demand of a deposit from such men would be as good as stopping their papers. Again, the amount of security required ought to have been laid down in the Act. Who will rectify a Magistrate's error, should he demand an unreasonable amount? Would it not have been enough if only common bonds had been required to be executed? As to the submission of the proof sheets to an officer of Government, this will, in practice, be simply impossible. Suppose a daily paper is started in Chittagong. How would it do, if the proofs were required to be sent on to Calcutta? Considering that most of the editors have no press of their own, and that consequently they have their papers printed elsewhere, the provisions of section 8, if carried out, will cause them great hardship. Is it not unjust that one should be made to suffer for another's fault? Is it reasonable to vest Magistrates with such large powers as those mentioned in sections 17 and 18? In our opinion only District Judges should be vested with them. As the District Magistrate will have to prosecute in most of these cases, he should not also be made the Judge; nor is it advisable to entrust a Subordinate Magistrate with such responsible powers.

As to the imprisonment, it may be asked whether it will be rigorous or simple? In Europe, State Prisoners are no longer subjected to degrading labor as ordinary criminals; and there is no reason why this should not be the case here also. All these imperfections in the Act might have been avoided, if only a little more time had been allowed. Would it not have done if, instead of the procedure laid down in the Act, newspapers had been required to take out licenses once or twice a year; if provision had been made for granting such licenses by a Committee formed for the purpose,

and composed of the District Magistrate, District Judge, the Chief Secretary of the local Government, and a native gentleman; and if licenses had been refused to any paper which might write sedition, and penalties had been provided for disobedience of the orders of the Committee?

8. The *Sambád Prabhákar*, writes in its successive issues a series of articles, five in number, on the Vernacular Press Act. As his observations agree, in the

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SAMBAD PRABHAKAR,
March 18th to 22nd,
1878.

main, with those noticed above, we give below only a brief summary:—The liberty of the press, an invaluable privilege, conferred by Metcalfe, has now been taken from vernacular papers by the Government of Lord Lytton. An Act was hastily passed at one sitting of the Legislative Council for this purpose. It is not, however, clear why, in this time of peace, such a law should have been enacted, with lightning speed, among a people famous for their loyalty. It does not appear that there would have been any danger, if the measure had received legal sanction in the usual way. But although we do not recognize much truth in the assertion that the writings of the native press are seditious to the extent described by Government, we, nevertheless, fully admit that the excesses of tone and style which occasionally disfigured them were such as fully to warrant the rulers to have recourse to some repressive measure. No other Government would, for a moment, tolerate such license in the press. We only complain that an invidious distinction should have been made between the Native and Anglo-Indian Journals, in favor of the latter. Both err grievously; and yet one is singled out for punishment. The reason assigned for adopting this course is exceedingly weak. It is much to be regretted that, for the faults of a few offending journals, the entire body of vernacular editors should be punished.

9. The *Bishwa Dút*, of the 20th March, in writing on the same subject, dwells on the importance of the liberty of the press, and the circumstances which

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BISHWA DUT,
March 20th, 1878.

have induced Government to pass the present Act. The measure has so much agitated his mind, that, in the present issue, he could only publish the text of the Act; reserving his comments for a future occasion.

10. The *Bhárat Mihir*, of the 21st March, dwells on the poverty of the agricultural class in Bengal, and especially in Behar. Their sufferings have been aggra-

The poverty of the tenantry.

BHARAT MIHIE,
March 21st, 1878.

vated by the imposition of new taxes and the high prices of food-grains. The writer hopes that the Famine Commission will, in the course of their enquiries, pay particular attention to the widespread and chronic poverty of the people.

11. We extract the following observations from an article in the same paper on the Vernacular Press Act:—Although being occasionally unable to conceal their

The Native Press Act.

BHARAT MIHIE.

thoughts and suppress the current of their over-wrought feelings, vernacular newspapers have indulged in a tone of writing and employed language not strictly proper; still not a single journal ever wished ill of the British Government. It is our belief and conviction that in Bengal there never was at any time, nor does there exist at the present moment, even one publication that cherishes feelings of hostility against British rule. Both by their disposition, and on considerations of interest, the people of Bengal are its friends and well-wishers. Their interest and advancement are, and, for a long time to come, must continue to be bound up with those of the British. With the exception of the veriest child, or the fool whose intellect is no better than a block of stone; no educated or intelligent Bengali would, for a moment, wish it any evil or seek to produce disaffection

towards it in the minds of the masses. The unjust acts committed by Clay, Kirkwood, and other Magistrates have indeed led us occasionally to employ strong language; but what English paper is there that does not at times do the same? What language did not the *Statesman* use some times during the incumbency of Sir Richard Temple, although it seems to think that the native papers aim at an altogether different object when they write in this strain? But to whom shall we unburden our sorrow? That privilege has now been for all time taken from us, by virtue of which we might have explained to the public why and with what object we had employed a particular form of language at any particular time. A lasting stigma has been attached to our name; while a dart has been lodged in our bosoms. God only knows what our aims and motives have been. Neither for the purpose of gain, nor from any feeling of disaffection towards Government, occasioned by a failure to secure an appointment, have we betaken ourselves to the discharge of journalistic duties. If, however, we are now compelled to swerve from the path, which a sense of solemn duty first led us to enter upon, we shall do so only after having called God to witness our conduct, and shall ever clothe ourselves in mourning. We exceedingly regret that the Bengali society and the Bengali language, which were both making progress, will be retarded in their development. Who can write any thing properly when there is fear in his heart? What language can proceed on the path of improvement with such a huge block of stone attached to its neck? Through the favor of the British Government, and the spread of education, Bengal was making rapid progress; and every year signs of healthy life were perceptible in our language and society. It is not therefore a matter for small regret that this should give place to a miserable and sickly existence. Is there no blind Milton in this country, who may, by publishing a second *Areopagitica*, in a deep and majestic voice, agitate for the liberty of the press? The spirits of the noble Metcalfe and Macaulay will not revisit this earth! And no one will, it seems, strive to restore to us the divine privilege, once conferred by those noble souls.

BHARAT MIHIR,
March 21st, 1878.

12. In another article, the same paper expresses his surprise that the

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Act, depriving the native press of its liberty, should have been passed at a meeting which was presided over by Lord Lytton, the son of him who wrote the *Rienzi*; and that Mr. Eden, the friend of Bengal, and the idol of the natives of this province, should have been one of the members. It is to be regretted that the Viceroy, who is a poet, gave his assent to this measure. The times are indeed bad as regards this country. We had really thought that it was absolutely impossible for Government to deprive the press of its liberty; so opposed was such a measure to the history, traditions, education, and character of the English people. We find that we were greatly mistaken. The extracts read before the Council were indeed objectionable; and, if it was necessary to suppress such writing, the object might have been attained in a hundred other ways. A warning to some of the editors would have had the desired effect. The extent of evil, which, it was apprehended, might be occasioned by their writings, is not so great as was supposed. So long as British bayonets and the good name of the British administration remain, there is no fear for the safety of the Empire. We believe that the evils complained of would have themselves disappeared in time. The native press is yet in its infancy; and it is no wonder, that it should constantly fall into errors. Publication acted as the safety-valve of public opinion; and if now suppressed, it will nevertheless continue to exist and work secretly. It would have been well if some lenient measure had been adopted, and our faults, of which undoubtedly we have many, pointed out in a friendly spirit. Government will

find that, after thus dispensing with the services of the unpaid agency of a free native press, few cases of injustice or oppression will be published. Now that the Act is passed, it is idle to complain of its provisions. We shall submit, with all meekness, as we have ever done to other laws of Government.

13. The *Education Gazette* and the *Moorshedabad Patriká*, of the 22nd March, express the same views on the subject of the Native Press Act as the *Sahachar*, noticed in paragraphs 6 and 7 of this Report.

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MOORSHEDABAD
PATRIKA,
AND
EDUCATION GAZETTE,
March 22nd, 1878.

14. The observations of the *Sulabha Samáchar*, on this subject, are identical with those in the *Bhárat Mihir*.

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SULABHA SAMACHAR,
March 23rd, 1878.

The writer seeks to vindicate his loyalty to the British Government; and considers it hard that, while the *Sulabha Samáchar* has almost invariably contained articles breathing a spirit of fervent devotion to the present Government, the Viceroy should have selected from it, in the course of his speech on the Press Act, a passage in which, without making any reference to the MacGregor case, the rudeness occasionally shown by Europeans towards natives was only described. So far as this matter was concerned, the language employed by His Excellency himself, in the famous Fuller Minute, was not less strong. There may have been excesses of language in this paper; but this is not sedition. It is exceedingly to be regretted that the entire body of native editors, good and bad, has been punished without being allowed an opportunity of defending themselves.

15. The *Hindu Hitaishini*, of the 23rd March, observes that the first Administration Report of Bengal, issued by Mr. Eden, is both, as regards printing, paper, and manner of execution an unsatisfactory performance. The accounts given are brief and meagre. The writer cannot approve of the eulogistic remarks made by the *Hindu Patriot* regarding this Report.

The Bengal Administration Report.

HINDU HITAISHINI,
March 23rd, 1878.

16. The sentiments of the *Dacca Prakásh*, of the 24th March, on the subject of the Vernacular Press Act, agree with those of the *Sahachar*, noticed in paragraphs 6 and 7 of this Report.

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DACCA PRAKASH,
March 24th, 1878.

17. We take the following from a long editorial in the *Soma Prakásh*, of the 25th March, headed "A monument of Lord Lytton's disgrace:"—While some men seek to leave behind them a monument of fame by surrendering the enjoyment of vast wealth, encountering almost fatal dangers, and even laying down their very lives, His Excellency Lord Lytton, although an accomplished and profound scholar, has, with his own hands, erected in India a monument of his disgrace—viz. Act IX of 1878. The scandal, in the first place, lies in the fact, that His Excellency has struck at the root of the liberty of the press, a fundamental principle of the British constitution, by virtue of which the British nation has become so great and achieved its superiority over all other nations. By showing disrespect towards this institution, he has insulted the British nation. Secondly, by enacting this law he has allowed both himself and the Government of India to be stained with partiality, and has thus brought disgrace upon them. In the third place, he has punished one for the faults of another. Certain of the native editors have, indeed, been imprudent and foolish in their writings; but how is it that for their faults, all the editors have been punished? Fourthly, by enacting a law for the suppression of the scurrilous writings of the native press, Government has shown that, as in the case of snake-bites, cholera, and malarious fever, it has not yet been able to discover the true remedy. This is, indeed, a matter for greater shame. It is evident from the speeches made on the

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SOMA PRAKASH,
March 25th, 1878.

occasion of passing the Press Act, that the rulers could not suppress their anger. That nothing can be properly done under an excited state of feeling is almost axiomatic. Now that, however, the normal state of calm has returned, it behoves them to re-consider the matter. In our opinion, Government should immediately repeal it, and by removing it from the the statute book, wipe out the disgrace thereby occasioned.

The members of the Legislative Council have themselves acknowledged that Government is equally abused in both the Vernacular and Anglo-Indian papers. If this be so, why should not both come under the operation of the law? Is it worthy of a Sovereign to take one in its arms, and another on its back? That abuse in English does not do any evil, is a worthless argument. The English papers serve as but models to the native prints; and their editors are examples to native writers. Government would be greatly mistaken if it thought that the people cannot discover what an English journal contains. The fact is, that those who love to read newspapers do somehow make themselves acquainted with their views on any given subject, whether they be expressed in English or not. Those, on the other hand, that do not take any interest in them, never trouble themselves about the matter. If it is the object of Government only to repress unreasonable abuse, let this be sought to be accomplished by the adoption of impartial measures; otherwise failure will be the result. We have a proverb current among us, namely, "Teach the daughter-in-law by beating the daughter." Possibly Government intends to read a lesson to the Anglo-Indian Press by thus punishing the native. If this be the case, the object will be attained only so far as learned and intelligent editors are concerned. But are all of this description? Are there not many Dhananjayas in the ranks of English editors also? This allusion obliges us to tell an old story current among us. A person had four sons-in-law, who one day paid a visit to his house. He entertained them so generously that they were quite charmed, and continued to stay for months together without showing any desire to leave the house. His sons, the brothers-in-law of these four men, became annoyed at this; and, after holding a consultation, one day, at dinner omitted the butter. Hari, who was the most intelligent of the four, left the next day; the other three, however, remained. A few days after, it was found that at dinner there were not seats for the three. This want of consideration was enough to send Mádhava, the second son-in-law, away. Pundaríkáksha, however, remained, until one day, he had coarse rice for his dinner, when he left the house. But Dhananjaya, the fourth, still remained; and could not be made to understand his position. At last, his brothers-in-law fell upon him and beat him so severely that he left the house crying. There are many such Dhananjayas among the English editors. The great defect of the Act is that it is marked by partiality.

Government, it appears, will not object to any fair and respectful criticism of public measures. But there are acts occasionally performed by Government, its officers, and Europeans, any reference to which necessarily gives rise to strong expressions. What is to be done in such cases? What are the native editors to do, when public officers commit oppressions and injustice, and Legislators enact unjust laws, and Europeans seek to promote their own interests at the expense of those of the natives? Must they remain silent? Any discussion of these subjects will make them liable to punishment. If they are debarred from doing this, there is an end to all use of newspapers.

After advising other native papers to be respectful in their tone and style of writing, and dwelling on the loyalty of the Hindu nation, the writer, in conclusion, asks Lord Lytton to seek to rectify the mistakes

occasionally committed by the public officers. If that be done, the mouths of the newspapers will be effectually stopped. Educated natives and Anglo-Indian editors should exert themselves in laying the views of the people on this subject before Parliament. They should not remain idle, for the fate of the native press may some day overtake them also.

LOCAL.

18. The *Hindu Lalana*, of the 14th March, directs the attention of the Cantonment Magistrate of Barrackpore to the inefficacy of the treatment of out-door patients in the charitable dispensary under the Northern Barrackpore Municipality, owing to the inferior quality of the medicines supplied. The matter should be enquired into by the authorities.

HINDU LALANA.
March 14th, 1878.

19. A correspondent of the *Education Gazette*, of the 22nd March, directs the attention of the authorities to the unhealthiness of most of the villages in the Hooghly district, occasioned by the silting up of the rivers Saraswati and Kuntí. The sufferings of the inhabitants are aggravated in the hot season, by a lack of good drinking-water. Now that the Road Cess, Public Works Cess, and the License Tax are all levied, it would not be unreasonable, if Government were asked to set free the silted-up channels of these rivers.

EDUCATION GAZETTE,
March 22nd, 1878.

BENGALI TRANSLATOR'S OFFICE,
The 30th March 1878.

JOHN ROBINSON,
Government Bengali Translator.

Occasionally the water is very shallow, and the fish are small.

The water is very shallow, and the fish are small.

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